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The Bronze Dove



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Victor
James Dwyer

THE
BRONZE DOVE:

A Poem,

IN

SEVEN CANTOS

London :

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1817.



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P R E F A C E.

IN company one evening, the circumstance of the Bronze, which forms the subject of the ensuing poem, was mentioned as an accredited tradition. The Author was so struck by the singularity of the incident, that, with the introduction of other original facts and the addition of some episodical matter, the form of a narrative embodied itself almost imperceptibly in his mind during the leisure thoughts and casual strolls of the winter months. The diction of the poesy is merely spontaneous and extemporary; the Author only

endeavouring to state a curious truth in the simplest and most appropriate language, which the varying circumstances of the narrative would admit.

VIATOR.

March, 1817.

THE
BRONZE DOVE.

CANTO I.

The Abbot's Journey.—Discovery of the Dove.

A TIME-CROWN'D oak south of the Forest
stood,

Ere Christian Saints arose, a Druid wood ;
Imbrown'd with moss, at foot a Bowing stone
For fairy-ring by passing swains was known.

North o'er the sward a palfrey urg'd its pace,
Rein'd by an Abbot of Cistercian race ;
Whilst on grey mule a beadle man before
A massive Cross lodg'd on his shoulder bore,—
Sign of his faith, which ev'ry passing wight
With folded arms might own and bending sight.

Saints make the Abbot on his journey thrive !
 For Elinor the fair he goes to shrive,
 Fair Elinor, of stately Edenburn
 Install'd the mistress by the fatal urn,—
 Fair Elinor whose orisons the eve,
 Tun'd to soft dulcimer, were wont to grieve ;
 For now the lily many a live-long week
 In sickness languish'd on her faded cheek.

In his tenth house scarce clamb'ring o'er the tree,
 The wint'ry sun just shew'd the noon's degree :
 For Cuthbert not in missals sole did pore ;
 But numbers Arabic and Egypt's lore
 His mind illum'd,—by Elinor's good sire,
 Who deck'd his altar with embroider'd tire
 From Eastern pilgrimage on safe return,
 Taught how the planets in fixt orbits burn.
 Scar'd by the gleam or seiz'd with wayward fit,
 The palfrey plung'd, and snorting champ'd the bit.
 But not the Abbot waver'd in the least ;
 His tinn'd spur rous'd, his crosier smote the beast.

Now better prospects cheer his path of haste :
 Tall elms impark'd contrast the naked waste.

A castled mass from the dark foliage broke,
 Round which the rooks, black as its turrets, croak ;
 Whilst ever and anon through op'ning glade
 The moated waters glimmer in the shade.
 But 'twas not Edenburn. No :—that lay far
 Until th' horizon sees the vesper star.

But,—hark !—from central tow'r the bell's dull
 tongue

With solemn echo rolls the trees among.

The Abbot seiz'd his beads ;—the sound was
 one ;—

“ Perhaps the soul of Elinor is gone !”
 Taught by his master's tone of pray'r or praise,
 The beadle stopt the Cross devout to raise.

A warrener, in youth for cudgels hight,
 From portal lodge now hail'd the passing sight.
 Three times his wavy locks of white he bow'd,
 Three times his forehead cross'd, thrice penance
 vow'd :—

“ Hail, holy father !—Saints and you forgive
 A sinner's speech !—But, as this day you live,—

Omen of ill which good saints keep aloof,—
 A shoe your palfrey lacks on hinder hoof.
 But help is nigh :—straight through yon copse the
 way,—

There Dunstan, Smith, will cause but short delay.”
 —“ Ha ! wayward brute !”— Quoth Cuthbert to
 himself;—

“ Could oak-stone scare thee like some purblind
 elf?—

Old man, advance : receive this holy sign ;
 From purgatory it will save condign.
 Ho ! Hither too, my beadleman so bold,
 And cross his palm with one bright bit of gold.”

The copse desir'd short minuté's travel near'd :
 Shelter'd within a hamlet small appear'd.
 An antler huge, once of some stag the pride,
 A rustic inn bespoke on sunward side.
 There dwelt the forester, sore cunning blade,
 The lawless tyrant of the sylvan glade ;
 For straight to Swainmote court he drag'd, in
 sooth,
 The witless travellers who pass'd his booth :—

“ Or stags they maim’d, or lowbelled the game,
 Or paid not toll,”—if paid not Horns their claim.
 Fain to make terms, each neighb’ring peasant slave
 With lamb or pig to mercy fee’d the knave.
 But now by sight of Cross and Churchman bold
 The abject wretch perceiv’d his sway control’d ;
 For sure the King in Eyre to Justice seat
 Would call the wight, who priest with wrong should
 treat.

Swift from his back the bugle shrill he drew ;
 His arrows cas’d and bow of supple yew,
 Crouch’d like his dogs in couples at his feet,
 And from the Abbot crav’d some blessing meet.
 The beadle lights ; within the Cross is borne
 And laid on verdant rushes freshly shorn.
 From pannel next the Abbot calm descends,
 Whilst at the curb the forester low bends,
 The palfrey leads officious to the shed,
 Where Dunstan plies the forge for needful bread.

The Abbot follows :—White the air as surf
 From saunt’ring footstep shrouds the humid turf :—

O'er the bright blaze, where welds the smith the
 steel,

His hands extends the redd'ning warmth to feel.

Nor he the inmate sole of charred hearth ;

Some urchin children, as the embers swarth,

There gambol'd merry, bare-foot hamlet race,

From the chill cold associate in the place.

And still the smith would rail ; with lively cheer

But round the sparks they hover'd still more near.

Lo ! What the gew-gaw bandy'd in the croud

With eager contest lifts their laugh so loud ?

The Abbot look'd ;—eke pity for the tribe

Chang'd into smiles to list their artless gibe ;—

A curious figure, bronze of dusky hue,

Gave to their rivalry a ready clue.

Soon as the Abbot's presence caught the rush,

Still was the pastime, ev'ry voice was hush.

He ask'd the bronze,—they instant gave him hold,—

It haply might some prodigy unfold.

It was a DOVE,—A DOVE OF BRONZE.—Behind

Its wings expand as floating to the wind ;

In front it plumes its molten feathers sleek,
 Enriches where a laurel sprig its beak,
 Affix'd to chain of tiny pensile links.
 Sweet bird of innocence!—the Abbot thinks.
 The smith perceiv'd :—its history to pledge,
 He dropt his hammer passive on the sledge.
 “ Ah ! Father, that the warrener late found,
 When yestere'en the great pool broke its mound,
 The fairest plot in Clifford castle land,
 With rows of box and leaden image plann'd :—
 Ah, Clifford castle, father, good and old ;
 Bristling the ears, of which rare tales are told,—
 How ghosts their monuments lift from the ground,
 Take from the walls the armour hung around ;
 Then, as behind the tapestry they stalk,
 Bear lights without lamps, without voices talk :—
 'Neath Christian banners, clad in faithful mail,
 Our young Lord goes 'gainst infidels to sail :—
 Well, father, in the slimy bottom bare,
 The war'ner seiz'd the bauble for his share.
 Mine was the purchase for a single groat,
 At Horns with ale to wash his supple throat :

And soon in yonder furnace it must glow,
 Which on that hill the air's free breezes blow."—
 —“ Would'st thou,” rejoin'd the Abbot, “ scape
 the fire,

For ransom of the bird admit this hire.
 My beadle, hark ! these children give a boon
 For cloves and apples on the new year's noon.
 Leave too the forester a pouch of pence,
 For this day's trav'lers free benevolence.
 Smith, for thy craft take this : and this for love
 From Cuthbert, now LORD OF THE BRAZEN
 DOVE !”

High beat the infant hearts ; low bent their heads,
 With pray'rs for each the Abbot counted beads.
 The forester and smith on suppliant knee
 From Holy Mother crav'd remission free.
 Borne from the rush-bed to the sturdy mule,
 The sov'reign Cross resum'd its sacred rule.
 The Dove depended from the Abbot's side,
 Lash'd 'neath his cloak with girdle of goat hide ;
 His palfrey spurn'd the earth with new-steel'd hoof—
 Saints grant the journey turn to good behoof!

CANTO II.

*The Abbot arrives at Edenburn—Confession of
Elinor.*

THE twilight sunk in mist :—one flaky space
Shew'd where the moon had veil'd her silv'ry face.
A torch of pitch, through loop-hole casting glare,
Hung out its signal to the nighted pair
On Edenburn's watch-tow'r : the warder's horn
Loud blew a blast : down from the pullies torn
The draw-bridge rattles ; rais'd again apace,
Now shuts the Abbot in the rampart's space.

Blue burnt the taper on the socket's rim ;
Fair Elinor y-gaz'd with eye-balls dim.
“ Mabel ! ”—she cried.—“ Madam ! ”—Responds
the maid.

“ The Oxysacch' infuse : now let thy friendly aid
My couch compose : for, lo ! the warder's blast
Announces good St. Cuthbert here at last.”

Swift Mabel flies. Another taper flames ;
 The burnish'd hearth another billet claims.
 O'er ebony the damask fine is spread,
 The ros'ry, crucifix and wafer bread.

—— Short pause succeeds:—When, lo ! an
 ancient page

Of hundred years palsy'd with long-gone age,
 Old Philibert clad in warm woollen coat,
 White as the honesty it would denote,
 The hinges turns from the long corridor :
 The Abbot follows placid o'er the floor.
 Himself he bore the Cross. In duteous plight
 Fair Elinor did homage to the sight.
 Due sign St. Cuthbert makes, now awful drest
 In full credentials of the sacred vest.

His square-toe'd shoes display'd the tufted rose
 'Neath glossy lustre of his silken hose.
 Down from his shoulders in translucent fold,
 And sleeves with fryslace deck'd, the white aube
 roll'd ;
 O'er it the chasuble enclos'd his shape
 With outlets cut, through which the arms escape.

The next the tunicle ; o'er all the cope
 Thrown from the back with train of graceful slope.
 Clasp'd round the neck beneath a swelling ruff,
 With golden thread embost and tartern stuff.
 The tonsur'd pate, the beard of yellow wan
 Complete the outline of the sacred man ;
 Whilst from his eyes the radiance of the mind
 Beam'd peace with angels,—love unto his kind.
 Approach'd her couch, he soothes the drooping
 maid ;

He knew some burthen on her mind was laid.

Forth her attendants at her head's faint nod :
 Then she reveals herself to man of God ;
 For ill the body struggles with its pains,
 Whilst the mind's treas'ry secret grief contains.

“ Father belov'd, since of my father friend ;—
 Would I with him had reach'd life's silent end !
 Then not my heart thought of past scenes would
 burst,

Nor be my present day with woes accurst.

Our Holy Lady, piteous to her sex,

Soon take me to her seat, where no ills vex !

For breath I drew, my mother forfeit paid
 Her life convulsive : with deep grief dismay'd,
 My father vow'd upon the holy grave
 Rest for the sainted spirit gone to crave.
 By formal grant, of parent whilst bereft,
 Saint Cuthbert guardian of his child he left ;
 Priest of his chauntry, who at midnight lay
 The solemn mass for the lov'd soul should say.
 Soon as my infant feet from Mabel ran,
 Thy care to form my dawning thoughts began.
 Thou taught'st me pray'r,—thou taught'st me
 praise :—Beyond
 The seas thou taught'st how roam'd the pilgrim fond.
 Oft from the sun at early matin time
 We beg'd some tidings from the sacred clime.
 Years long claps'd, at length my eyes were blest
 With the wish'd image :—me a parent prest.
 But spare me words :—grief suffocates my voice :—
 Short was the season given to rejoice :—
 Abbot of Evesham and a Saint by fame,
 His charge expir'd, one father straight became ;

The other, finding earth still pilgrim's way,
 Sunk on his staff: cold on his couch as clay
 Old Philibert first found him one sad morn:—
 Ward to the king then I—a maid forlorn!

True to the charter, won at Runnymede,
 The lords of Edenburn would ever bleed
 For Baron rights: my father crouch'd to none
 Save grief: of lords confederated one,
 He spent his sojourn in his native land,
 To save our Henry from the Gascon band.
 Thou know'st, Saint Cuthbert, how as omen blest
 The sov'reign hail'd our house's fallen crest,
 For ever bent its ancient pride to tame,
 Gave to Earl Engolrane its ward in claim;—
 Not thee the placid pastor of my youth,
 But knight, I wot, in vizor'd garb uncouth.

Ah me! Of each paternal host bereav'd,
 Can words express how my sad bosom heav'd,—
 When Philibert,—with palsy's doubled shake,—
 When Mabel,—speech whose sobs forbore to
 make,—

In rush'd, as at lone dulcimer I sat,
And told a stranger train with plumes in hat?

'Twas Engolrane: yet not his looks were awe;
But calm benignity, methought, I saw.
Not warrior rough from the rude soldier's camp,
But graceful courtier of accomplish'd stamp.

More than I thought to his complacent look
My mind unbent: all timid doubts forsook:
With meek petition e'en I ventur'd soon,
Fond fav'rite of my hopes, to ask a boon.
As hears the captive shut his bolt of woe,
'Twas then my blood recoil'd—at his stern No!

Whither, on earth, who parent cannot greet,
Save unto one in heav'n shall they retreat?
'This all I crav'd,—Our Lady to profess
'Midst the shorn sisters of Wigorn's recess:
For why these flowing natal tresses keep,
For their lost givers which but cause to weep?

And now the mask was dropt. To heav'n deny'd,
An earthly consort as the rival vy'd.

A banquet was announc'd :—Silvestrod came,
 Son of Earl Engolrane, and vow'd a flame ;
 Not with a plastic mien as smil'd the sire,
 But for a mere command enforc'd desire.
 In heart, which woo'd our Lady's gentle face,
 So rude a suitor ne'er could find a place.
 'Twas now my turn prerogative to show :
 With lips indignant I retorted—No !

Then was announc'd the king's command : then
 fine

Upon my lands : but nought did I repine
 For earthly riches, alienated now
 From consecration to the Holy Vow.

Yet brave in arms the knights. This to their
 suit

Some respite gave and left the moments mute.
 For a fierce bandit,' out-laws from the realm,
 Sought all liege folks in ruin to o'erwhelm.
 Each forest tract was blood ; each cottage latch
 Was fear ; and nightly blaz'd the corn stack's thatch
 To rid these fierce freebooters from the land,
 The stranger knights enroll'd a vassal band.

Success their prowess gain'd : the banquet room
The victors welcom'd to its well-won doom.

But not for me the voice of mirth had charm.
The bridge was down, the portal wide : from harm
Ensur'd, my melancholy sought to range
Far from the din in some lone lab'rynth strange.
With warm capouche then forth I sally'd wrapt,—
In brilliant icicles the landscape capt :
Short furlongs I had stray'd in pensive mood ;
A flutt'ring wing was heard ; a note soft coo'd :—
It was a dove ; it to my bosom fled ;—
On eager pinion next a falcon sped.”

— At name of Dove, to speak the Abbot
seem'd ;

But Elinor no pause for silence deem'd.—

“ Poor bird ! I sigh'd : as mine thy piteous
plight ;

Weakness by pow'r pursu'd in drooping flight.

For thee I'll struggle : in my turn a friend,

Rais'd up by heav'n, may for my cause contend.

The falcen straight I seiz'd with muffled hands :

erch'd on my shoulder, it my force withstands,—

Now struck my bosom with infuriate beak,
 Now peck'd my eyes, now tore my tender cheek :—
 I scream'd aloud :—sudden a whistle shrill
 Reclaim'd the falcon to its ready will.
 First to my dove I sanguine look'd :—'twas dead :—
 Tow'rd my preserver next uprais'd my head.
 Two steeds an esquire held : fixt on his wrist
 The falcon seem'd to tell the prize it mist.
 A cavalier stood near : a shriek I gave :—
 'Twas not Silvestrod.—*Lady ; leave I crave :—*
But travelling as England's other peers,
The sport of falconry my journey cheers :—
 With earnest eyes my grateful thanks I bow'd :
 To be my escort home the stranger vow'd.
 Ere I could speak, a well known voice cried—No !
 'Twas Engolrane :—I fled as timid doe :—
 My solitary exit he had spy'd,
 And, eagle like, quick from his aerie hy'd.
 Loud wòrds assail'd my ears. I stopt to look :
 Each cast his gauntlet ; each the gauntlet took.
 On went the strangers : far as could be seen,
 My pray'rs pursu'd :—'twas youth of comely mien.

Not Engolrane appear'd 'till ev'ning's sign :
 Heav'n interpos'd meanwhile its aid benign.
 From Sheen's fair palace came a courier swift,
 And call'd the knights to Westminster with thrift.
 Prince Edward there a tournament would hold,
 Ere to the east he leads his comrades bold.—
 Whilst snort the steeds and glitter gay the squires ;
 My guardian lord a solemn oath requires
 On Cross and sword,—for term the tiltings last,—
 That not shall be the castle purlieus past.
 His eyes the meteor light'nings now forsook,
 And some dark purpose hover'd in his look.

The oath I vow'd : what would I not for joy
 Release to gain from his intrusive boy ?
 When, dim survey'd from topmost casement's ken,
 The far procession vanish'd in the glen ;
 To secret escritoir I made appeal,
 Where many a mark lodg'd 'neath paternal seal ;
 By lure of these some hind, whom he might catch,
 Bade Philibert for Cuthbert's aid dispatch.
 Our Lady bless thee, Saint, for thy good speed !
 Grant but kind friendship more for one small deed.

Since not 'tis mine to die amidst my kin,
 From my own sex last rites I fain would win.
 Hie to the king with the first purpling morn,
 And beg a cell for me in good Wigorn."——

Here ceased Elinor.—But now recluse
 Religion shuts the scene for sacred use :
 For mortal presence ministers a bane,
 Where angels guard from scrutiny the fane.

——'Tis o'er. Rais'd from his knees, the Abbot
 spoke,—

“ Yes ;—thou shalt bear our Virgin Lady's yoke.
 To York's Arch-Bishop, Giffard, friendly known,
 A greater boon would from the king be shown.
 I'll supplicate his grace,—with purpling morn
 Depart to gain thee cell in good Wigorn.

But ere I go to my night pallet's sleep ;—
 Daughter, forbear that vigil long to weep ;—
 Since to thy shelter once a dove did flee,
 And proper emblem is that bird of thee ;—
 Call up my beadle :—for Saint Cuthbert's love,
 'Till his return, safe keep that Brazen DOVE.”

CANTO III.

The Tournament.—Appointment of the Justice Court.

IN sea of ice, slow rolling from the vent,
The smould'ring smoke shews the volcano spent ;
And the glad natives, for eruption red,
The sun see new above its dusky head.
From rival factions, struggling in her breast,
So England hails at length returning rest.

The mountain Cambrians, rival bord'rer state,
Their arms surrender'd to the victor's fate.
The Baron league no more the people bound,
With Leic'ster laid low prostrate on the ground ;
The pontiff chair, confin'd in sacred brink,
Of Palestine's far conquest sole could think.

To celebrate this halcyon tide of joy,
And give each restless spirit still employ,
Prince Edward rais'd the Cross, by royal writ
And summon'd to the lists all warriors fit.

No morn in time's whole calendar more glad
 Arose : soon as the frost-tipt sunbeams had
 Lit up the spangles on the minster glass,
 Forth to the pageant rush'd each jocund class.

On what a spectacle the eye was bent !
 There shines the crimson of the Royal tent.
 In front the files of cross-bow men appear,
 And archers green with polish'd bows in rear ;
 By twentics rang'd in tactical brigade,
 And ev'ry twenty by its captain sway'd.
 Upon the flanks the pikemen poise the lance ;
 And sword-girt troopers on their chargers prance,
 O'er which, on gay caparisons astride,
 With maces arm'd their constables preside.
 The circuit round with awnings fair is spread,
 Where wait spectators the encounter dread :
 With silken cords engirt the center space,
 Where blazon'd banners tell each champion's
 race.

The cymbals ! Hark !—Hark ! The huge base
 resounds !

Now Garter's trumpet animates the bounds :—

—“ If knight his knight to try here seek assent,
Our liege invites him to the tournament.”

Prince Edward then on courser golden brown
Rode forth : his esquire cast the glove-mail down,
Then challenge gave :—“ Whoe’er this realm
denies,

To take that gauntlet up our Prince defies.

None dares ! Long life our liege the Saints then
grant !

But, that the knights fair pastime may not want,
To him Dame Isabel will give her hood,
Who from the prince shall win that gauntlet good.”

Three trumpets sounded. First Delancey claim’d
The damsel’s favour : then Montalbert aim’d
From bride to oust the prince antagonist :
And Herbert Godfroy enter’d last the list.
All fell : the prince alights :—Shouts rend the air :—
He wins the scarf from Isabel the fair.
Now silence reigns : anew the trumpet’s clang !
A stranger herald comes with bold harangue,
Full strange equipt : by some attractive charm
A falcon sat upon his bridle arm.

—“ If present here Earl Engolrane appear,
 De Clifford seeks to interchange a spear ;—
 For insult shown in woods of Edenburn,
 Bids him receive of chastisement return :
 Or Engolrane must loose the beauteous fair,
 Whom he shuts up from right of Nature’s air,
 Or bear that falcon to his captive’s cage—
 Pledge that her champion fell her cause to wage :
 For this no jeopardy of common tilt ;—
 Or grant of right, or fight to the sword’s hilt.’ ”

—Forth at the summons Engolrane careers,
 His frothing charger in defiance rears.—
 “ Dar’st thou, vain stripling, with pretensions pert
 ’Gainst Engolrane his rightful ward assert ?
 Thee of thy base demesnes I now attaint,
 Bid thee of title shew one vestige faint :
 They are but theft from our good liege’s right ;—
 If not,—disprove it in his royal sight !
 Before our liege, inappropriate of the ward,
 Who dare my rightful guardianship discard ? ”
 —“ I dare : ”—a solemn voice proclaims aloud :
 A wond’ring murmur circles through the croud.

An avenue, form'd in recession long,
 Shews some procession moving through the throng.
 Lo !—To the lists a palfrey urg'd its pace,
 Rein'd by an abbot of Cistercian race ;
 Whilst on grey mule a beadle man before
 A massive Cross lodg'd on his shoulder bore.
 —It was St. Cuthbert.—Their dropt spears disclose
 The silent wonder of the list'ning foes.
 The beadle rais'd his Cross :—St. Cuthbert spoke :—
 “ In name of Holy Church I here invoke
 York's fam'd Arch-Prelate to vouchsafe his aid
 To the petition of an orphan maid ;
 Who from Earl Engolrane would claim resort,—
 Not to the courtly scene or festal sport,—
 But in the sanctu'ry of convent vow,
 And with her goods our Lady's shrine endow.”

De Clifford quak'd : abhorr'd the convent's
 name :—

When rose the king and thus adjudg'd the claim.
 “ Ill suits such interlude with this gay field,
 Where but in trial knights their spears should
 wield.

Thus from our royal audience we discharge
 These suits, involv'd in exigence so large.
 York's fam'd Arch-Prelate, Giffard, we appoint
 With our Lord Chief Justiciary joint ;
 Who shall to these demesnes make straight repair,
 And view the cases with impartial care ;—
 As shall the evidence be truly seen,
 Sentence declare the rival lords between,—
 If Clifford's tenure of his lands be just,
 And Edenburn's fair ward to Church a trust.
 For here no combat of judicial kind,
 But recreation for the nation's mind.
 Sir knights, return :—Lord Abbot, too attend
 Of these things witness to their final end.

Now, trumpets, sound : on with the tilts of sport :
 Be fair dames' smiles the only suits we court !”

CANTO IV.

The Justice Court assembles at Clifford Castle.—Its Transactions.

FROM spider web the verger clear'd the wall
With heathy brush, and o'er the clay-floor'd hall
The rushes strew'd. Adorn'd by grotesque tiles,
The chimney wide is stor'd with faggot piles.
The benches in gradations due aspire,
Where shall to-morrow sit the law's stern sire.

Sleep wrapt the castle guests.—One hand sustain'd

His head, with aching contemplations pain'd ;
A key the other held o'erlaid with rust ;—
Thus Clifford sat,—nigh like to lifeless bust.

It was the wardrobe room, a curious spot,
Of antique drap'ry fill'd with various lot.
The tatter'd orfrays in the niches hung,
To which a cent'ry's moths corrosive clung.

With angel heads and iron cramps comprest,
 In far recess repos'd a huge stone-chest.
 De Clifford rose :—he pray'd :—“ Whilst I inspect
 Yon coffer dread,—my rights, ye saints, protect !
 By it or not, as knight, my banner streams ;
 By it or not, crowns Edenburn my dreams.”

 'The lock harsh creaks ;—the hinges scarce
 relax ;—

'The air wafts forth ;—the light forsakes the wax.

—— Now sits the session : awful its array !

The fiefs and vassals their due service pay.

—From the tribunal calls the Judge his roll :

'The warden answers foremost of the poll ;

'The twelve regards next, worth a knight's fee,

'Then verd'rors four of esquires' less degree ;

Agestors, woodwards, foresters,—the last

Their names into the jurisdiction cast.

 Now comes the sheriff with his white wand
 train,

And pleads the forest-charter in arraign.

Assent the Judge in the King's name accords,

Then reads his precept to the suitor Lords.

Whilst forms of court the Chief Judge thus areads,
The Churchmen count in unison their beads.

—— Then rose Earl Engolrane: his corslet bright
For doublet now exchange'd with hemlace dight.

“ Few are the words, Lord Judge, which soldiers
bring,

Not us'd to plead, but prove by arms the thing.

This brief be told:—When last Prince Edward led
His force against the Welch, Earl Clifford bled,
Stock of that scion who usurps this hall.

As life ebb'd fast, with half-artic'late call

He stay'd me from the fugitive pursuit:

—And ever had Earl Engolrane been mute;

But that his son has dar'd my ward corrupt,

And e'en the royal presence interrupt:

—These the last words from Clifford's falt'ring
tongue,

His prophet spirit prelude of some wrong;

Lost was our patent in John's Baron wars—

The cause none knows—my heir this myst'ry bars—

Against the king in arms has fought my son—

Loyal I fall—Oh—pray our fief re-won—

In arms has fought the son : Despencer's friend,
 He sought the crown from our lov'd liege to rend :
 He fought at Evesham in the rebel train,
 Nor can all Severn wash his fealty's stain :
 Of lands and goods the traitor I attain,
 Of tenure dare him shew defence most faint."

But now respondent's plea the court declares ;
 Each eye in pity its observance spares.
 Calm rose De Clifford, as with spiral cist
 Steals to the clouds from earth the fleecy mist.
 — " From times distracted past, my good Lord
 Judge,
 I will not renovate the private grudge.
 In right and wrong when partisans were mixt,
 On none can well true obloquy be fixt :
 But foul-mouth'd charge of treason I repel,
 By royal amnesty who charter'd dwell.
 From years of war, since Eve of Hallowmass,
 'Tis only to these desert tow'rs I pass,—
 Tombstone of times, in which death's fatal scythe,
 From blighted homes has cut the stock-flow'r
 blythe.

Then first these eyes Earl Engolrane did see,
 Then first disclos'd his beauteous ward to me :—
 And still shall be, guide to that fairy land,
 This falcon true companion of my hand.

'Twas then he rous'd the spirit with his taunts,
 Which still in arms the lists of Minster haunts.

Thus treason, damsel, tournament explain'd;
 I would, Lord Judge, these walls as well maintain'd.
 But if by records hang dead Clifford's lands,—
 Alas!—his heir no evidence commands.

'Tis true : the wardrobe room our coffer holds :
 Last night unlock'd no patent it unfolds."—

Hollow the armour hung upon the walls;
 Hollow the murmur through the armour falls.
 But most the warrener his white locks rent,
 To think of Clifford's hopes thus sudden shent;
 For dear, who sold them not for harpy's bribe,
 Their absent Lord was to the vassal tribe.
 Alone Earl Engolrane, with brandish'd arm,
 Displays the triumph of his bosom warm.
 —“ Yet some bequests there were ; a crucifix
 Blood-stain'd, some hair, a rosary commix.

Blotted with tears and faded dim with age,
 Some marks are written on the ros'ry's page.
 But from the cradle trained to the field,
 I know no learning but the blazon'd shield.
 These holy men the mystic book possess :
 The court may view it,—though not me redress."

—— Here Giffard his pontificals display'd :—
 " By facts decisive from this book betray'd,
 As will St. Cuthbert on his Cross attest,
 We pray, Lord Judge, a short adjournment's rest
 For this high court : we pray that next may meet
 At Edenburn our royal sov'reign's leet ;
 And for the session, as its dame's just dow'r,
 Free speech, free egress from her guardian's pow'r."

The judge awards : his badge the warden waves,
 And forth the sheriff leads his band of staves.
 As slow the crowd departs, the war'ner cries :
 Home tott'ring to his turf-thatch'd lodge he hies,
 With hopes for Clifford cheers his aged blood,—
 Prays saints protect him 'till another flood.

CANTO V.

Edenburn.—Justiciary Transactions.

A LUSTROUS dial, sheets of crystal ice
The new-year's sun-beams to the earth entice.
Old Philibert, coff'rer since Stephen's days,
A friendly face shews not to modern ways.
Least does intrusion of new guardian lord
With the sage vet'ran's household sway accord.
—" Give him a barley-corn for mass?—No! no!
Nine times to purgatory let him go!
But may our sweet dame, Elinor the fair,
When ta'en from life, be angel in the air!

Gramercy! Mabel! Take this orange red;—
They say in land of Holy Spain 'twas bred,
Where oranges, like pippins, load the groves,
In di'mond form and stick it round with cloves;
With cordial sack whilst of delicious taste
To fill the complimentary cup I haste:

For yet our lady is not left so lorn,
To want a wassal on the new-year morn."

When Sorrow's children fascinated dwell,
Some well-tim'd trifle often breaks the spell.
Pleas'd with the boon fair Elinor revives,
And grateful in the moment's joy connives ;
For, though her heart now droops dejected low,
'Twas in past seasons wont with joy to glow.
E'en yet the pulse of recollection lives ;
E'en yet her hand the votive garland gives.

The oratory with light steps she seeks :
'Twas desolate as winter's chilly weeks.
But quick for ornament she bids provide
The evergreens which vegetate the tide ;
The holm which vari'gated edges paint,
The laurel dy'd with sap of hue more faint,
The gaudy bay with clust'ring berries red,
And larch so airy with its breezy shred.
Each shrub in bunches with white ribbons bound
The oratory she distributes round.
As weeks in years, to ev'ry scone a tax
She renders of illuminated wax :

High round the altar blaze twelve torches fall,
 Signs of the months which in the circuit fall,
 One taper, emblem of the sun sublime,
 Chief o'er the cross pourtrays the king of time.

A cedar bracket in one niche was plac'd,
 Nor image by nor holy relic grac'd.
 "The Brazen Dove amidst this smiling scene,"—
 —Thought Elinor,—“would sit like vestal queen!”
 The dove was brought, its film of aged dross
 By Mabel burnish'd to a radiant gloss.
 Soon was the bird, with winter wreaths entwin'd,
 By stalks of ivy to the niche confin'd.
 “So sit, sweet loveliness, within thy bow'r,
 For there intrudes no falcon's ruthless pow'r.”
 Just then the falcon knight shot 'cross her mind:
 Of her preserver, sure, her thoughts were kind!

But what the tumult in the courts without?
 Now Elinor pale palpitates with doubt.
 The doors unfold: and, lo! in bright array
 Of priests and nobles comes the solemn way.

Not Engolrane alone! The cross, the wand
 Bespeak some friend, some advocate at hand;

Slow the procession halts,—in deep amaze
 Th' illumin'd oratory round to gaze.
 Forthwith the priests to the dread altar pass,
 And chaunt with holy melody the mass.
 Seiz'd with the fervency of sacred fire,
 From kneeling crowds responsive sounds aspire.

To Heav'n's great Judge this primal homage made,
 The King's high judge the next obeisance bade.
 "What better sphere accords with mortal speech,
 Than where of saints the presage we beseech?
 Be this our court: our bench be this recess,
 Where waits that lady fair her quick redress!
 Keep, lady, still thy station at our side;
 In our parental auspices confide.

— Lord Abbot, now we bid the cause narrate,
 Why here our court must thus perambulate?"

Then spoke the Abbot, on his cross reclin'd,
 Whilst still as zephyr's breath the train behind.

"The proofs of patent grant De Clifford fail:
 With better hopes those relics strange I hail.
 This lock of hair, so bright with auburn hue,
 To Clifford's birth affords no doubtful clue.

This crucifix, with drops of foul blood stain'd,
 Was to the murder'd vot'ry's neck enchain'd.
 Ere struck th'assassin, with absorbed look,
 She wept, she read, she wrote in this sad book.
 These letters black, tear-blotted on the page,
 But half develop some mysterious age :—
 The saints, who intercede for human kind,
 Expositors become their sense to find :
 — *If murder'd,—to the Brazen Dove appeal ;*
It can alone De Clifford's rights reveal."—

At name of Dove, the crowds their eyes apply,
 And either spy'd,—or thought a Dove to spy.
 — “ But where the Dove ? To what wild region far
 The sun pursues it on his circling car?
 The Dove this aged warrener late found,
 When burst the terrace pool its ancient mound.
 This smith obtain'd in purchase fair the bird ;
 And Evesham's priest became its master third.
 To Elinor of Edenburn the last,—
 Lo !—there it sits !—the precious witness past.”—
 Quick to the niche all eyes inquiring turn'd ;
 There sat the Dove in verdant bow'r inurn'd,

All glist'ning in the taper's cheerful light,
Like kindred sign that gilds the stars of night.

Here to the niche alert De Clifford sprung—
He seiz'd—he grasp'd—he quick the prize unstrung.
What scowls of Engolrane shot 'cross the wiles!—
How beam'd the looks of Elinor their smiles!—
Whilst, as the light'ning's quick forewarning lance,
He saw the bronze attract the Judge's glance.

Oh! What a moment that of blank suspense!
The chain he drew first from the beak's defence.
He look'd:—a key was molten in the final link:—
He look'd again:—beneath the wing's right brink
An orifice was stamp'd; quick cleans'd from rust,
His eager hands the magic key adjust.
In pliant wards the magic key intrudes,
And from the breast a secret door protrudes.—
From Elinor resistless bursts the scream,
And all but think the sight some phantom dream,
When from the hollow of the brazen hold
Down on the rushes drops a vellum fold.

The Churchmen told their beads: the Judge's pulse
The throbs of strong astonishment convulse.

As some pale marble in the sculptor's lot,
 De Clifford stood transfixed to the spot.
 But, oh!—how each relaxing muscle chang'd,
 When read the Judge the tablets thus arrang'd.

—— *Of vile arts victim, barb'rous tyrant John,
 De Clifford brave, my lord, my life, is gone!
 But, that the caitiff king may ne'er recant
 From our posterity this castle's grant,
 And these demesnes from future issue free;—
 Be now the Brazen Dove their safe trustee!
 Should I be spar'd to die a Christian death,
 And with our Lady's rites resign my breath,
 Of crucifix will be the wardrobe chest,
 Of hair, of rosary, of Dove possess.
 If I must perish by assassin's blow,—
 The Brazen Dove assassins ne'er shall know.
 Ere yet remorseless they shall burst the door,
 Or yet their poniards stain with blood the floor,
 Forth from the casement, as the missile stone,
 The dove shall fall to the pool waters prone.
 The other relics, single found, attest
 The steel's sure violence plunged in my breast.—*

Protect my souls ye everlasting saints!—

My spirit sinks, the outward vision faints.

— “ Too sure she fell : ” — Here paus'd the Judge
to say ; —

“ And wond'rous comes her testament to day.”

The Abbot rais'd the Cross:—the Bishop blest ;
Whilst piteous sympathy the court possest.

The larger membrane next attracts his pains ;
Which fair decypher'd thus the Judge explains.

*I, John, liege Lord of England's royal realm,—
The Legate witness and our Prime Anselm,—
To Hugh de Clifford and his heirs by law,
And never to escheat by future flaw,
Do Clifford Castle grant with all its grounds
Out of mine own and proper forest bounds :—
To wit,—one hall, one hamlet and one park,
One mill, and purlieus shown by broad fosse
mark,*

*East from the channel of the Severn tide
Far as the oak-stone on the forest side ;
Then back returning from the mill-stream's way
By ancient street form'd in the Roman day.”*

Here ceas'd the Judge. He look'd at Engolrane,
 Now vacillating as some air-tost vane :—
 Then thus resum'd.—“ Ye liege men of this land,
 Of common rights who here defenders stand,
 Can we annul the Crown's establish'd grant,
 On title just a new surrender plant?
 Is not De Clifford, here in court who pleads,
 Right heritor of these paternal deeds?

“ He is: and be the false arraign accurst!”
 The answer rose in one accordant burst.
 —“ Earl Engolrane, by our good Liege's fee
 I now dismiss this foul and hollow plea;
 And to De Clifford, here in court who stands,
 As rightful Lord adjudge the Dove and lands.
 Nor civil suit nor act of combat war
 From valid right De Clifford can debar.”

De Clifford took the Dove. In accents loud
 Around him rung the salutation proud.
 But most his eyes their thanks to her declar'd,
 Who in his exultation foremost shar'd;
 For not the Dove it her aggriev'd to part,
 Which led her knight to his paternal chart.

She deem'd it ransom from the falcon's ire,
Which on his wrist display'd the attendant 'squire.

 Betwixt the churchmen plac'd in middle place,
Her eyes uprais'd, she trode with gentle pace.
The Judge succeeds. The Sheriff waves his wand:
Until next morn adjourn'd the court must stand;
When from its session Edenburn's fair dame
Redress shall hope in equity the same.

 Aloof mov'd Engolrane :—Tribunals just
In lawless bosoms ever raise distrust.

CANTO VI.

Edenburn—Midnight.

A SMALL persuasion with a wish accords.
To stay that night when the high Justice Lords
De Clifford bade in hospitable cheer,
His sentiments with ready impulse veer.
Eke Engolrane with honey'd accents mild
Now courteous prest on Fortune's favour'd child.
But most some thought of Elinor, I wot,
From pow'r to move impal'd him to the spot.

With beech-masts fed now ample smoak'd the boar,
Around with garnish strewn of chesnuts hoar.
The platters drawn,—kind pledges crown the bowl,—
The goblet brightens e'en the friar's cowl.
De Clifford most, warn'd with the day's success,
Paid to the mantling cup a free address :

Quick Engolrane in deeper pledges vy'd,
 And well his guest with willing phrensy ply'd.
 But, sudden curb'd by sage discretion's look,
 The festal board for pallet he forsook.
 Then Engolrane, his care sincere to vouch,
 All courteous led the stagg'rer to his couch.
 His esquire there, with torch of rosin lit,
 His master waits 'till he the board should quit.
 Right honest 'squire ! A heart of faithful core
 His sturdy frame, like some tall plantain, bore.
 His head too, stor'd with unobtrusive wit,
 For each occurrence fenc'd the caution fit.
 On woven mats he makes his Lord recline,
 Then strews warm web-cloth o'er his limbs supine.
 There through his senses whilst dead torpor crept,
 On neighb'ring pallet ere himself he slept,
 Th' auspicious Dove makes round his jerkin fast,—
 In staples barricades the door-bolts vast :
 Companions trusty for the sleeping head,
 Drawn arms deposits covert in each bed :
 Then, when to burn its watch the torch wastrimm'd,
 Down sunk the 'squire : so rest his eye-lids dimm'd.

— In truth ! To stoutest heart 'twould be no
taunt,

To feel bad omens in that chamber gaunt.

Through time-worn crevice sigh'd the currents
dank ;

The length'ning floor but seem'd one sightless blank ;

The far walls vanished in dusky jet,

All round with pannels of brown walnut set ;

Save where, just lighten'd by the torche's glare,

Some frightful outline started into air,

Refractive from the tapestry's dull shapes,

In sights of battles, murders, fires and rapes.

Now seems St. George to menace with his spear,

But slays the dragon,—when descry'd more clear.

Loud snor'd De Clifford in inebriate trance.

The 'squire awoke :—A form seem'd to advance :—

With flapping wing the falcon join'd its din,

Prognostic sure of some approaching sin :—

His filmy eyes he rubb'd :—He saw a lamp,

Well nigh extinguish'd in the distance damp ;

Not that within the chimney's dingle, late

Plac'd for the watchman of the midhour's state.

No ! Quite reverse its site ! It had its stead
 Just where his Lord repos'd his drowsy head.
 He look'd again ! A panel seem'd laid bare ;—
 Two living forms were moving in its square :
 Just, where uncover'd in his wayward rest,
 A hand prepar'd to pierce De Clifford's breast.
 The 'squire his good stiletto seiz'd ; with start,
 More fleet than bow emits the winged dart,
 He pierc'd the dastard's arm. The murd'ers fly.—
 “ Awake, my Lord ;—awake, my Lord, you die.”—
 He did awake :—from stupour instant free'd,
 He saw his 'squire of valiant man had need.
 He stopt not to inquire : each seiz'd a torch,
 And desp'rate enter'd bold the mystic porch.
 The falcon flew disturbed from its cage,
 And join'd the chase on shoulder of its page.

By spiral steps a passage strait descends ;
 The flowing blood-drops trace it as it bends.
 Now die the footsteps : now their echoing bruit
 Not far declares them from the quick pursuit.
 Scarce live the torches :—scarce with single breast
 The chase through long obliquities they prest ;

Whilst many a stumbling stone produc'd a fault,
Dropt from the ceiling of the moulder'd vault.

Now stands a door on hinge : through it they rush :
It backward closes with their sudden push.
As they emerge, from the opposed wall
A massive trap reverberates its fall.
Ere it descends, a falling masque they snatch,
And glimpse of stranger's features transient catch.

Now by the blood-hounds sudden set at bay,
Pursuit, return alike foreclose the way.
Each door in vain they struggle to unhasp,
Inclosed both by one impervious clasp.
Some secret spring each avenue contains,
And thus conceals,—whilst blood displays its stains.

Foil'd in their aim, now breathes their discontent,
T' explore the prison where their feet are pent.
It was an area, rugged and forlorn :
The clay nests plaster'd to the mullions torn,
Shew'd how the bats, enamour'd of its gloom,
For colony had chosen this sad room.
The mildew'd walls, down which the rains distill'd,
Tatter'd by winds the sable scutcheons fill'd ;

Where lions rampant, forked dragons told
 The pedigrees of ev'ry name from old.
 Strange effigies, from milk-white marble hewn,
 On jetty pediments beneath were strewn :
 Some had their beards long floating on their breast,
 And some their heads in circling helmets prest :
 In pairs connubial some the tablet grac'd,
 And some in sculptur'd solitude were plac'd :
 But all in pray'r their folded hands upheld,
 To shew what hopes their dying bosoms swell'd.

The esquire sigh'd :—" This sure the dismal dome
 Where meant the murd'ers' hands our final home."—
 As though in horror's cause to add a vote,
 The falcon here terrific rais'd its note.

De Clifford rose : to one dark nook he past,
 Where had his eyes on some dread vision cast.
 It was the charnel-hole : in jumble strange
 There lay the symbols of the mortal change ;
 Arms without sinews, without grinders jaws,
 And spines from which the ribs distend their claws.
 But, top-most of the heap, in dismal state
 An eyeless skull expos'd its worm-worn pate,

Where still behind had serv'd one matted lock
 From dust to drag it with distorting shock.
 An Angel, nail, a cross and coffin-board
 Complete the spectacle of this dread hoard.

But fresh the relics seem'd : fresh mould adher'd.
 De Clifford look'd :—a new-made grave appear'd.
 He stoop'd to look : 'twas dug two fathoms deep,
 Its promis'd victims in safe hold to keep.
 The spades and mattocks from the hillock rose,
 Prepar'd the surface with dispatch to close.
 The esquire groan'd :—" Here take, my lord, a sight
 Of the cold pillow we had prest this night !
 Here, had the wretches wrought their bloody deed,
 This last asylum waited for our meed.
 My blood runs chill : for more these horrors scare
 Than in day-fight a thousand falchions' glare.
 Oh ! haste, my Lord ! Ere come the ruffians more,
 Let us some outlet in the walls explore."

Rous'd from the musings of his pensive mind,
 De Clifford rais'd his torch some void to find.
 An aperture, behind a mural tomb,
 An egress promis'd from the cavern's womb.

A stair appears :—they climb a door's approach ;—
 At once an open with their shoulders broach.
 Its structure eaten by corrosive time
 Gives way :—and, oh, what fair and fairy clime
 Now greets their eyes ? The oratory, bright
 With unspent symbols of the new-year's light,
 Stopt their exulting utt'rance in amaze.
 A dulcimer quick met De Clifford's gaze :
 Bard-like, he struck the strings : oft in his tent
 Thus wont in war sweet solace to invent :—

Beneath a luckless planet born,
 Arose the falcon knight :
 His parents soon forsook the morn
 And brought the orphan night.
 In wars at home, in wars abroad,
 In courts and tournament,
 He still pursu'd his darksome road,
 A stranger to content :—
 Then first a beam of hope the saints did yield,
 When with his falcon sporting in the field.

Then first the ward of Edenburn
 Came radiant on his way :
 The night of woe could ne'er return;
 Whilst she prolong'd the day.
 When perils dire of law enclose,
 Her presence breaks the spell ;
 When murderers in arms arose,
 Her spirit came to tell :—
 Then still thy aid, his guardian angel, yield
 To knight with falcon sporting in the field.
 But if a convent's veil shall screen
 This messenger of joy,
 Then farewell to the fairy scene,
 Where fancy knew no cloy !
 Oh ! then renounce the cell for love,—
 The camlet and the hood :
 Be still protectress of the Dove ;
 And, roaming through the wood,
 The sacred succour of thy presence yield
 To knight with falcon sporting in the field.
 —But now his rapt'rous lay the minstrel stops ;
 Lo ! at his feet a verdant garland drops !

With ecstasy he snatch'd the gentle boon :—
 'Twas winter sprigs entwin'd with gay festoon.
 He rais'd his eyes to search the giver's hand :
 In gallery from corridor he scan'd
 Two virgin forms attir'd in damask white,
 As in the moon-beam shines some sylvan sprite.
 'Twas Elinor ; 'twas Mabel ; who to say
 Their midnight orisons had hi'd that way :—
 But, when they found the office better sped,
 Their 'kerchiefs wav'd with silent pray'rs and fled.—
 “ Thee, lady, guard the saints and our good liege !
 My couch alone the murderers besiege !”—
 The knight redeems his Dove, and round its crest
 The festoon'd garland hastens to invest.
 But not went knight nor esquire to their couch ;
 For still their thoughts to murderers would crouch.
 The hall's cold hearth with fuel they relume ;
 In wond'ring talk the livelong hours consume,—
 To what adventures of the coming day
 A night so horrible shall pave the way ?
 The falcon too, as from enchantment loost,
 Its feathers plum'd and sunk content to roost.

CANTO VII.

Edenburn.—Morning.—Final Adjudication.

NOW sits the Judge ;—fit proclamation made ;
And all the equipage in court array'd.
On right Eboracum assumes his stand,
The Abbot leads fair Elinor by hand :
On left Earl Engolrane his port lifts high,—
And Silvestrod attends companion nigh.

At sight of him De Clifford felt a pang,
By which sad recollections seem'd to hang.
The esquire too was struck with panic strange,
From which in vain his thoughts essay'd to range ;
Like some spent bird which, flutt'ring on the tree,
Its eye from basking serpent fain would free.

Then thus Earl Engolrane.—“ This patent gives
My ward in charge whilst she a minor lives.
According to the usage of this land,
Her marriage for Silvestrod I demand.”—

To this the prelate :—" I the bans forbid,
 Since prosper forced wedlock never did.
 Thy ward, besides, for other rites than wed
 To altar seeks allotment to be led."——

De Clifford next. " I too the bans deny :—
 Let not the lamb at the wolf's mercy lie !
 In hospitality's most sacred breach,
 Of murd'rous act these Lords I here impeach."
 —Then cry'd the Lords,—their swords clench'd
 fast in hands,—

" Archers, attention !—Ready at your stands !"

—— " Most sad, my lords, the treachery to
 tell,

Our host his guest with bev'rage ply'd full well.
 If for that fault 'neath censure I am laid,
 The penance of my life was nearly paid.
 As his strong potions lock'd me fast in sleep,
 The vile assassins o'er my slumbers creep.
 A host of witnesses their crime attest ;—
 Mine esquire here, of nightly guards the best,
 Above my couch the secret sliding door,
 This mask clandestine and the blood-stain'd floor.

But chief, which makes the stoutest shoulder
shrug,

Down in that vault the fresh grave ready dug ;—
Dug whilst alive, like infants lull'd to sleep,
Where long entomb'd the secret we might keep ;—
On us its victims, ere the morrow dawns,
For last receptacle the cavern yawns."

—Now Engolrane gave signal with his feet :
Archers rush in :—all eyes in terror meet.—

The prelate rose ; and with a pontiff's state
Spoke the dread words,—DIE EXCOMMUNICATE !

Here knelt the Captain.—“ Archers, sheath your
bows !

My Lords, we come not here insurgent foes.
Caught now in legal judgment's righteous hold,
Perish these nobles, traitorous as bold !
Brave vassals we !—as the Brigands well know ;—
But to our King and dame allegiance owe.
Last night, we pledge on holy Cross the tale,
Our orders were each chamber to assail,
To put the sleeping inmates to the sword,
To fire the castle nor escape afford,—

The crime unto De Clifford's charge to lay,
And bear the Lady Elinor away.

We feign'd advice,—*Lest any should survive,
In open day to take our prey alive.*

This now we do ;—not Lords who laws fulfil,
But these, the vile conspirators of ill.”——

——“ Enough.”—Here gave the Judge his manual
sign.—

“ Hence bear the traitors to strong hold condign,—
The King's own tow'r ; there let the culprits wait
From the law's sentence their notorious fate.
For know the days of anarchy are past,
When Baron arms their iron bondage cast
On crown and realm : the stubborn Noble's will
Must now one voice of public right fulfil.”

—— Again 'twas hush ! Reviv'd from death-like
swoon,

Fair Elinor looks round : collected soon,
When not her persecutors near she sees,
With rapture listens as the Judge decrees.

“ Of Engolrane the guardianship is null.—
Until the minor's years be complete full,

The ward of Edenburn, in sentence just,
 To Giffard and Saint Cuthbert we entrust.
 So, daughter, may thy virtues long adorn
 The holy sisterhood of good Wigorn!"

As aspen leaf, pale trembling at the sound,
 Whilst Elinor her eyes cast to the ground,
 De Clifford to the guardians intercedes
 With all the eloquence a lover bleeds.

—— "I know 'tis vain to talk to men in years
 Of lasting vows and sentimental tears :
 For holy seers, who passions all subdue,
 And sages who cold rules of law pursue,
 Will touch with slighty hand those lighter strings,
 From which in younger minds emotion springs.
 T' admire the fair,—is deem'd a wayward thought,—
 To seek their smiles,—an incident of nought.

Of softer vein, howe'er, one little spark
 In sternest minds still glitters through the dark.
 'Twill stand the test of law's most rigid sense,
 And with it least Religion can dispense.
 Its temper more is mov'd by gentle fire,
 Than can strong flames its energy inspire.

This virtue, with sweet loveliness endu'd
On ev'ry heart to steal, is GRATITUDE.

This finest sense could the mute dove unfold,
In what sweet terms it would that sense have told;
When the fair wand'rer took it to her breast,
And from the falcon's talons safe carest?

Though mute the dove, not mute is vocal man,
His words his gratitude discover can.
With voice most earnest that this thought can raise,
Lord Judge and fathers, take its warmest praise.
If not 'tis sin my rev'rend sires to thank,
Still less my patroness of female rank!
From the dove's lord, protectress of the dove,
O! take then more than gratitude,—take love.

Again in lands and my paternal hall
By this mirac'lous dove the saints install.
But drear those courts: the long-liv'd reign of woe
A new purgation needs to undergo.
Yes:—the departed ancestor who bleeds
Of some fair substitute the presence needs.

This fair dame she!—this solitary bough
Which craves protection from connubial vow,

Left as myself, like woodbine drooping weak,
A mutual column for support to seek.

For sure not gratitude's sole treasure mine !
In eyes of Elinor it us'd to shine.
Then give, fair lady, to this virtue range ;
Soon into real love 'twill fervent change.
Presumptuous thought ! Yet not that thought
should die,
For all the riches in this dove that lie.
I hop'd last eve, when dropt this gay festoon,
It was from Elinor of love a boon.

Your pardon, fathers ! All my heart distends,
One trial brief my hopes or builds or ends.
Since not 'tis lady's use of love to speak ;—
Spar'd be the crimson mantling to the cheek !—
With silk festoon, behold, this dove is worn,
As round the forester the woodland horn.
I draw the pledge ; and if without a frown
True o'er her shoulder be the festoon thrown,—
Assent she gives ;—then, as a last appeal,
Lords, bind the covenant with sacred seal."

De Clifford rose with faltering advance :
 Downcast sat Elinor in silent trance.
 The pledge he drew :—The fair one show'd no
 scorn :

Quick round her bust the circling silk was worn.
 De Clifford clasp'd his hands : the lords stood
 mute :—

Soon the Arch-Prelate answer'd thus the suit.

“ Prince Edward needs De Clifford in his
 train

For great adventure on the holy main.
 Him we enjoin unto this great crusade
 A tribute of one hundred archers made.
 In her knight's absence we confide our ward
 To Wigorn's abbess for her kind regard.
 The crusade o'er, if living come the knight,
 And still our ward survey the solar light ;—
 If still in each shall equal hearts incline
 Your fates in future union to combine ;
 We here confirm the vow : betroth'd each stands,
 Nor shall all ocean separate your hands.

Time then shall prove with cool delib'rate test
 The transient fervours of the youthful breast;
 And years cement with principles mature
 The faithful duties of that station pure.
 So shall not long and late repentance rue
 Love's compact to aversion chang'd untrue.
 To save meanwhile thy spouse from treach'rys vow,
 Our holy interdict we issue now.
 Take it; confine it closely near thy heart,
 In fight for charm it chance may ward a dart.
 Meanwhile the Judge shall take your lands' account,
 And on return refund a true amount.
 Depart then, knight, to Westminster at morn,
 Whilst we conduct our ward to good Wigorn.
 This eve at table and at vesper hour
 To saints and to yourselves your vows outpour:
 And may our Lady lead you through the bliss of time
 To scenes of higher bliss in an eternal clime!
 —That, for memorial of this great event,
 Ne'er future age may want acknowledgment;
 This DOVE, the agent of the work benign,
 To heav'n's own guardianship we hence assign;—

Where Wigorn's chapter holds its sacred stall,
Direct insertion in the transept wall;
There, midst the pennons which record the fight,
The peaceful emblem shall the eyes delight,
And tell that, whilst the sov'reign wields the sword,
An equal scale his justice will afford.
So whilst the knight, with bold adventure far,
Braves all the perils of the Moslem war,
The dove, in feather'd tribe without a peer,
Pledge of espousal, the lone fair shall cheer;
And long this truth declare to stranger's curious
gaze,—
The saints the just will guide through life's most
darksome maze.

NOTES.

Page 5, line 3.—*Bowing Stone.*

FROM the earliest antiquity a variety of stone monuments has remained to the present day. They exist upon most of the forest districts of the British isles. Their first use was to designate religious, military and civil boundaries, and to be monuments of the corresponding events. In ages, when the want of letters soon consigned the original purpose of these relics to oblivion, ignorant and succeeding generations attributed to them a superstitious reverence amounting to idolatry. The passenger inclined his head to them on his way; and the multitude assembled around them to celebrate their heathen rites of worship. Hence their name of Bowing or Bow Stones remains to the present moment; although often converted by vulgar tradition into the contrary instrumental denomination of the Bow, or implement of Archery. In many instances, the neighbouring peasantry have assigned these relics to fays and fairies, as their constructors and

guardians. These are earlier in time and different in figure to the class of stones called Crosses.—The following lines, suggested by the contemplation of a very ancient and curious specimen, comprise perhaps all that can be said upon the subject; and will place every conversion and change of these relics in a clear and impressive point of view :—

Earth starts from chaos: beauteous rob'd with grass,
 In mountain covert lurks the flinty stone.
 The deluge flows : all shatter'd chang'd the mass,
 Its base a cave became, its peak a cone.
 In this rude arch the world's surviving race
 The past revolve,—forecast their future lot :
 Curious to view their new dominion's face,
 The cone their beacon, climb the highland spot.
 There fresh display'd the dappled rainbow stood ;
 And men pronounc'd the peak the pillar of the flood.

But soon the arts supply tradition's stead ;
 Signs from the living to the distant race
 On granite block, in shapes of ductile lead,
 With graphic chisel faithful taught to trace :—
 Arts rais'd the olive, taught to climb the vine,
 In fenced bounds confin'd the wand'ring stock.
 Men took their fragrant oil, their purple wine,
 And snow-white wool from firstling of the flock :
 Then, pious pour'd the votive off'rings good,
 Jehovah's name inscrib'd on pillar of the flood.

But reaches now of life the measur'd stage
 In vital air the wisest, oldest sire,
 Scath'd with nine centuries of blighting age ;
 From the first world who told of hist'ries dire.
 Whilst round the bed a long-drawn kindred wail,
 His head he lifts,—his sightless eyes he bends ;—
 For accents now in breathless struggles fail,
 Yet mem'ry faithful lives ;—his hand extends
 To the lov'd site,—his last remains to hood,
 A sepulchre entreats at pillar of the flood.

From foot profane to consecrate the ground ;
 Soon as the crescent moon shews her new wain,
 The mountain natives raise a fun'ral mound,
 The cypress plant, and solemn rites ordain.
 But cold his icy breath Arcturus blows :
 To 'scape his rage a temple's dome they raise ;
 Where children's children long may bring their vows,
 And emulate their parent founder's praise ;
 To virtue rouse descendants of his blood
 By name of him, who sleeps 'neath pillar of the flood.

Entwin'd with wool, no more the patriarch crook
 Now genial sways the shepherd-tented plain :
 The merchant camels palm and brook forsook,
 And foreign hosts advance, a locust train.
 An iron sceptre now o'crawes the land,
 An iron crown the myrtle wreath succeeds :
 From camp to camp still as pervades the land,
 They seek some trophy for their ensign's deeds :

As in the horizon seen afar it stood,
They form their monument from pillar of the flood.

And now each vale exhales the kindled smoke
In wasted tracks, where drives the victor's car :
A plund'ring horde attend the tyrant's yoke,
And build his throne on ruins of the war.
A solemn meeting calls the clarion's sound,
At which his nobles shall their chief invest
With sov'reign sway o'er the usurped bound,
And clothe his person in a regal vest.
High was the dynasty install'd, where stood
For coronation seat the pillar of the flood.

Far from the eminence his eyes he cast
To view the tributary region's space ;
Along the confines of his empire vast,
And bade some lasting marks for bound'ry place.
Then cent'ring at the mount's conspicuous mass,
From bright Orion to the polar sky,
He bade the intersecting highways pass,
And meted to his dukes the lands by dye :—
The sign of each, for long distinction stood
A column modelled from pillar of the flood.

This hist'ry thine, thou antiquated stone,
Which on the wilderness of mountain peak
Sittest from human scrutiny alone,
Save when the shepherd climbs the region
bleak !

Coeval chance with those on Hebron's bound
 Infixt by holy Abram's primal race,
 Some Celtic sire by thee demark'd the ground;
 The northern sons of Ashkenaz to trace.
 Thus has for centuries half-fractur'd stood,
 Token of ancient lore, the pillar of the flood.

Page 6, line 12.—*But numbers Arabic.*

Although THE EARLY MONKS WERE GENERALLY
 ABSORBED IN GOTHIC LEGENDS, yet some bright con-
 stellations occasionally glimmer'd amongst them. *Friar*
Bacon was so very wise as to be deemed a witch by his
compeers.

St. Barnard the founder of the Cistercians, who were
 also called Barnardines, was another exception. But
 taken as a body the Benedictines were the most learned of
 the Holy Orders: and to them is principally owing the
 preservation of the Classics.

Page 8, line 18.—*There dwelt the forester.*

Concerning the antiquity of forests, Lord Coke says,
 it cannot be known by any record or history when they
 originated; except in the two instances of New Forest
 and Hampton Chase. From Dr. Wilkins's Anglo-Saxon
 Laws, however, it may be collected that of old the Kings
 of England claimed a prerogative to make forests of the
 lands of any of their subjects; so that no man could say
 the lands of which he was possessed were his own.

When the lands had been thus afforested, they came

under a peculiar jurisdiction, most repulsive to the temper of the nobility and fraught with oppression to their vassals. The Charter of the Forest or an exemption from Forest bondage was first established under King John. The confirmation of this invaluable privilege was the first act required from all the succeeding feudal kings.

In the ninth year of his reign Henry III. gave a more solemn renewal of these national liberties: in return for which he received one fifteenth part of all the moveables of the realm. Upon this transaction we find the form of a parliament or deliberative body in treaty with the king under the name of witnesses. The component parts were those which now exist; the King; Lords Spiritual and Temporal; and Knights, Masters or Commoners. There were present twelve prelates, nineteen Abbots, Hugh de Burgh the Chief Justice, nine Earls, the Constable of Chester, twenty-one Knights and others. This sanction was again renewed by letters patent, to which Prince Edward was a party, on the 28th of March, in the 28th year of the same King.—*Vide Pulton's Collection of Statutes: An. Non. Hen. Sec.*

From this fountain head of oppression, whilst suffered to remain open, the bitter waters flowed through the most minute channels into every petty nook. “ Even the Foresters kept ale-houses in the forests, and compelled the people to come thither and spend their money, for fear of their displeasure; and no man could enjoy his common quietly, if he did not make presents to them of lambs,

pigs, corn, hay, or some other things worth their acceptance; besides, they exacted toll not only of those who came into the forest with loaded carts and horses, but generally of every man who passed through it." These impositions were remedied in Henry's reign by direct statutes. The subject of toll was restricted to merchant carts and horses alone; which were to pay by the year,—carts 4*d*:—horses 2*d*.

Page 9, line 1.—*Or lowbelled the game.*

Lowbelling was a fowling in the night. One man went first and rung a large hand-bell slowly; the noise of which made the birds lie still. Next four men extended a large net over the seat of the game. Another man then lighted little bunches of furze from a dark lamp or pan of coals. The blaze made the birds rise, and they were taken in the net.

Page 9, line 7.—*The King in Eyre to Justice seat.*

The Courts of Justice, crude and arbitrary as they may be thought to have been, were originally ambulatory and followed the King's own person. In the ninth year of Henry III., however, a separation in the royal functions took place. It was declared then—"Common Pleas shall not follow our Court; but shall be holden in some place certaine." The appropriations of time likewise immediately succeed for the session of these judicial courts:—"Once after Easter and again after the Feast of St. Michael:—so that every man may have his liberties."

The presidents of these King's Courts were called Justices in Eyre, or itinerant Judges. When the forest yoke was broken, its forms of transacting judicial business still remained in the civil usage of the land. The forests had been formed into two divisions; one north and one south of the Trent; and a Justice annexed to the survey of each. The Judges of Assize upon a more numerous scale having succeeded to their functions since the Act of Elizabeth; the Justices in Eyre remain little more than quiescent functionaries. It is the abolition of these two offices, which was recommended to Parliament by the Finance Committee during the present session of 1817. In reality their few effective duties might be merged in the office of the Commissioners of Forests.

With the amelioration of the general administration of Justice in the highest Court, the subordinate branches, which were left still within the Forest jurisdiction, partook of a proportionable improvement. The Swain or Sweinmote, the Court of Farmers, that instrument of innumerable vexations, was limited to three periods in the year, and assembled only for purposes of practical utility:—viz. fifteen days afore Michaelmas for *agistment* or the reception of money for the ley of cattle:—about the Feast of St. Martin in the winter for *pawnage*, or *pannage*, which was the receipt of money for the pasture of hogs and swine upon the acorns and beech masts:—and fifteen days before the Feast of Saint John the Baptist for the *hunting of the Deer*. *Vide Pulton's Collection of Statutes, An. Non. Hen. Ter.*

Page 10, line 19.—*It was a Dove, a Dove of Bronze.*

In the proper truth of this occurrence, the event was not so fortunate as described in the narrative. The Dove, or in reality the eagle, was found in the water and taken to the smith's to be repaired, in perfect ignorance of its containing either cavity or papers. The smith's children laid hold of it as a toy; and, handling it rather roughly, caused the door to fly open; when out dropt the papers. This was a fine increase for their diversion; they made a bonfire of the parchments, and the smith came in too late to rescue them from demolition, but in fatal time enough to witness the certainty of the irrecoverable loss.

The contemplation of the Eagle preserv'd in the Cathedral of —— may excite sentiments analogous with this account.

Page 12, line 2.—*Which on that hill the air's free breezes blow.*

The ancient plan of smelting ores was by means of furnaces on the hill-tops, simply constructed by excavations of the earth, or structures of stones. They were formed with apertures and drafts on every side; so that a constant current of air was maintained to incite the fire, which was fed from the forest woods growing in profusion around.

Page 13, line 19.—*The oxysacch' infuse.*

A composition of vinegar, sugar, and the juice of sour pomegranates. This ingredient is entered in King Edward's Roll for the use of the Queen.—*Vide Archaeologia, Vol. xvi.*

Page 14, line 18.—*The white aube roll'd.*

A splendid equipment, consisting of Copis, Chesibills, Tonikels, Aubis and Auterclothis, and formed of the richest materials, was made for the College Royal of our Lady of Eton, and for the College Royal of our Lady and Saint Nicholas of Cambridge by one Robert Cocksale Vestiment Maker of the City of London, in the 25th year of Henry VI.—Maister John Langton Bishop of Saint David gave the order; but either died or was translated before the articles were delivered. It affords a curious specimen of the manners of those times, to see the course adopted by the tradesman in this dilemma. The amount of the charge was £241 19s. 3d. He turns orator or petitioner to the King: states that he is deeply indebted for the different stuffs, and humbly prays he may save himself from ruin by keeping the articles until he shall receive payment. A delicate way of taking the law into a man's own hands, and a sure preventative of suits of recovery. The King ordered the bill to be paid at Newbury, on the 19th of August, per the Lord Bishop of Sarum and Lord Say.—*Vide Vol. XVI. Archæologia.*

Page 15, line 12.—*Then she reveals herself to Man of God.*

The doctrine and practice of auricular confession, when a compulsory act and enforced by way of placing the consciences of the flock in the keeping and under the control of priests, must have been capable of sad abuses,

and often led to the most fatal catastrophes. When confession however comes in a voluntary shape, it is far from being so inconsistent with the independence of the human soul, as may be superficially supposed.—This more especially in the case of grief than of sin. How many go mourning through life all their days, for want of a friend to whom they can disclose their sentiments; how many too have their confidence treated with disregard or turned into obloquy! Where seriousness, secrecy and probity however govern the heart of the auditor, and misery dictates the language of the speaker, such communication is often the prelude and step to happiness. Approaching death at least puts to rout all human delicacies and doubts: and in this dread period many have, as it were by mental struggle, deferred the breath's departure for days; in wishes and efforts to discard some weight from their minds before they quit the earth. Their thoughts disclos'd, they have almost instantly composed themselves to death, and expired like infants in all the placidity of sleep.

Page 16, line 19.—*Abbot of Evesham.*

Private Lords had the rights of Advowson to Abbeyes insured to them as well as secular grants. Accordingly the 33d cap. of Henry III. provides: "All patrons of Abbeyes which have the King's Charter of Advowson, or have old tenure or possession in the same, shall have the custody of them when they fall void, as it hath been accustomed, and as it is afore declared. —*Vide Pulton's Collection of Statutes. An. Non. Hen. Ter.*

Page 17, line 4.—*Ward to the King then I,—a maid
forlorn.*

As the original right of forest, vested in the King, constituted one general scale of encroachment upon property ; so his right of wardship was a chain as intolerable and universal over the person. All minors and their estates were the privilege of the King or his manorial lords. They could even take the minors and marry them at their discretion. The abuses may be consequently at once imagined.

The statutes of Henry III., as well upon this as other points of public and private interest, give considerable indulgencies. The provisions for redress are as decisive as the corruptions had been intolerable. The guardian was to make no waste nor sale of the estate or personalty of the ward, but give up the lands and their issues well stored with ploughs and other things, as he found them, upon the completion of the minor's age by writ of *Mortdauncester*. Upon the delicate subject of marriage, the Lord was prohibited from disposing of his ward to a villain or a burgess to his or her disparagement, except the party should be of an age of reason to give consent. The guardian, however, was still left his justification in offering the minor a proportionable matrimony. The greatest demur in Henry's legislation seems to have taken place in this respect, upon the high feudal principle of purity and parity of rank. Yet, again, here relief was afforded to the refractory or unwilling, and the ward

was allowed to commute even the most eligible and unobjectionable match at a fine certain upon the expiration of his or her nonage. In this predicament the heroine of the Poem is faithfully depicted. The guardian in turn is shewn equally tenacious of his prerogative, and unwilling to conform to laws of recent enactment.—*Vide Pulton. An. Non. Hen. Ter.*

Page 13, line 8.—*To save our Henry from the Gascon bund.*

Although Henry made so many equitable concessions in his statutes, it was by force of compulsion from the British Barons. Having married the daughter of the Count of Provence, he filled his court with gentlemen of that state, as a set off-against the haughty native Nobles; who seemed to shew the royal prerogative little mercy. This first class of favourites were Poictevins, or the Queen's party. These were reinforced by another foreign cabal on the paternal side, the King's half-brothers, or the Gascons; the sons of his mother by her second husband, the Count de la Marche. The fury of the Barons was now at its highest pitch; and took occasion to shew itself in bold terms upon the King's first pecuniary exigencies. The Church took the lead in the redress of grievances, by ceremonies and oaths; but a party of the secular Nobles, headed by Simon de Montfort Earl of Leicester, made an appeal to arms. This civil war was transacted upon a large scale and with alternate success. The royal party suffered sometimes the deepest reverses; the

King and the Prince being themselves at different times prisoners. The battle of Evesham, however, at last gained by the address of Prince Edward and marked by the death of Montfort, his son Despencer and other heads of the disaffected, once more consolidated the throne and settled the peace of the kingdom. The Welsh had received previously too severe a check from the Prince, to be in a state to offer any interruption. This brave people were afterwards finally subdued by Edward, when he came to the crown, after his return from the holy expedition.

Page 19, line 15.—*For a fierce Bandit.'*

In a state of civil war the whole ties of society are relaxed. Hence there are not only the horrors of two conflicting armies, but the peaceable inhabitants lie at the mercy of marauders and deserters, who occupy the tracts whence the regular forces are absent. During Henry's troubles, whilst the populace gutted the metropolis, the banditti ravaged the unprotected provinces. Strangers consequently feared to enter the kingdom, and merchants durst not venture to traffic. The picture of the kingdom during this reign offers the strongest persuasive against the relaxation of the powers that be; and shews how miserably a people in confusion can find their boasted freedom a compensation for the blessings of good government.

Page 21, line 12.—*The sport of falconry my journey
cheers.*

This diversion was of most ancient and favourite fashion. It was under cloak of such recreation that Charles II. made his *escape to the sea-coast*.

Page 26, line 9.—*By Twenties rang'd.*

The field parade of those days was as here described. One item will serve for proof, taken from the pay-roll of Edward, upon his accession to the crown; when he commenced his irruption into Wales:—Dated in the modern style, 27th August, 1281. Eight constables of cavalry, and eight hundred and fifty-seven archers, with their forty-three captains of twenties, 55*l.* 6*s.*—Each constable of cavalry had per diem 12*d.* Each archer 2*d.*; and each captain of a twenty 4*d.* per diem. The present currency of the realm would be about the proportion of twenty-five times the amount.—*Vide Vol. XVI., Archæologia.*

Page 27, line 11.—*First Delancey claim'd.*

The names introduced are none of them factitious through the course of the whole poem, but taken from the list of Nobles in the muster-roll of Edward, according as they would harmonize best in metre. If to any of the characters virtues be attributed or vices affixed, which did not belong to them;—may their *manes* admit this confession as an appeasement! By medium of some names the narrative must be conducted; and no substitutes could be

adopted but those which were extant at the supposed date of the poem.

Page 38, line 2.—*To want a wassal on the new-year's morn.*

This term is derived from the Saxon, *Waesheal*: i. e. *Be in health*. It originated in *Rowena*, the daughter of Hengifius, who delivered a golden cup full of wine at a banquet to King Vortigeru with her own hands. So late as James the First it was perpetuated by the ceremony of going about upon the Twelfth day at night with a great bowl of ale, drinking healths.—*Vide Phillips's New World of Words*.

Selden alludes to the custom in his *Table Talk*: article *Pope of Rome*.

“The *Pope* in sending relics to *Princes*, does as *wenches* do by their *wassels* at *new-year's* tide, they present you with a cup, and you must drink of a flabby stuff: but the meaning is you must *give* them *moneys* ten times more than it is worth.”

An apple and cloves, or nuts, were the usual compliment amongst children, and from the common people to their masters and lords; whilst the *wass-ail* circulated amongst the great and opulent.

“This apple stuck with nutts has been offered to Sir John, as an *humble* new year's present.”

“He has an orange and rosemary, but not a clove to stick in it.”

In conformity with these precedents is the Abbot's gift in page 12, line 6, of the Poem :

“ My beadle, hark ! These children give a boon
For cloves and apples on the new-year's noon !”

Page 44, line 13.—*Do Clifford Castle grant.*

The conciseness of ancient grants is a surprising contrast to the tautology and envelopes of modern conveying. The length of the hand, with the breadth of two or three fingers, is the usual compass of a feudal instrument. Some of the more diffusive sort contain often the confession : “ *A. B. his ✕ mark :*” because he could not write his own name. The form in the *Poem* is not an *unfaithful* parody.

Page 47, line 9.—*Ample smoak'd the Boar.*

A boar with chesnuts was anciently a luxury of the first repute, fed from acorns of the forests. This animal receives a different flavour even now, when killed and brought to table after battenning for some weeks upon the spoils of the woods ; as is still customary in the south-most counties of England.

Page 50, line 6.—*A hand prepar'd to pierce De Clifford's breast.*

This part of the Poem is an episode, and unconnected with the original transactions of the Dove. In its own department, however, it is equally a matter of fact. There is, however, this difference, that the blow *did* take effect

upon the instigations of revenge. The noble aggressor, however, was afterwards visited with severe compunctions of conscience. He renounced the world, inflicted upon himself a penance which ended but with his life. He threw up his secular affairs and became a rigid ecclesiastic.

Page 59, line 10.—*Die Excommunicate.*

The form of this dreadful denunciation was couched in the following terms :—

“ By the authority of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, and of the glorious mother of God, and perpetual Virgin Mary, of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and of all the apostles and martyrs of blessed Edward of England, and of all the saints of Heaven, we excommunicate, accurse, and from the benefit of our Holy Mother the Church, we sequester,” &c. &c.

Page 65, line 17.—*And may our Lady—*

These expressions of benediction—*May our Lady—Saints grant*—and others similar—are in strict consonance with the tone of the times depicted. A sergeant at arms to King Edward the Sixth thus concludes his petition :—“ *God for his mercy and all the Seintes that be in Heaven grant.*”

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